



**Études irlandaises**

**35-2 | 2010**

**Traduction : pratique et poétique**

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## *Fílocht Chomhaimseartha na Gaeilge*

**Clíona Ní Ríordáin**

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**Édition électronique**

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesirlandaises/2063>

ISSN : 2259-8863

**Éditeur**

Presses universitaires de Rennes

**Édition imprimée**

Date de publication : 30 décembre 2010

Pagination : 184-185

ISBN : 978-2-7535-1246-7

ISSN : 0183-973X

**Référence électronique**

Clíona Ní Ríordáin, « *Fílocht Chomhaimseartha na Gaeilge* », *Études irlandaises* [En ligne], 35-2 | 2010, mis en ligne le 30 décembre 2010, consulté le 19 avril 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesirlandaises/2063>

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## RÉFÉRENCE

Ríona Ní Fhrighil (ed.), *Fílocht Chomhaimseartha na Gaeilge*, Baile Átha Cliath, Cois Life, 2010, 313 p., ISBN 978-9-011764-21-7, 20 euros

- 1 This volume of essays published by Cois Life provides an excellent overview of the work of contemporary Irish language poets. As Ríona Ní Fhrighil points out in her introduction to the volume, the poets under scrutiny have now been welcomed into the academy and figure on the syllabi of most Irish departments in universities in Ireland and abroad. Nonetheless, the fragmentary nature of the critical response to the work continues to be problematic. This collection of essays attempts to remedy the situation.
- 2 As an introductory text, aimed mainly at students of Irish literature, the essays on the whole follow the same format; a short biographical note and a critical commentary on the work of the poet in question. In general, the essays are devoted to individual poets and are presented in chronological order; thus Bríona Nic Dhiarmada's essay on Máire Mhac an tSaoi (b. 1922) opens the volume, while Ríona Ní Fhrighíl and Róisín Ní Ghairbhí's essay on the state of Irish language poetry today, making reference to poets like Aifric Mac Aodha (b. 1979), constitutes the final chapter of the book. Particular attention is paid to the poets of the INNTI generation, entire chapters are given over to Michael Davitt (Tadhg Ó Dúsháine), Liam Ó Muirthile (Pádraigín Riggs), Gabriel Rosenstock (Ailbhe Ní Ghearrbhuigh), Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill (Ríona Ní Fhrighíl) and Louis de Paor (Caoimhín Mac Giolla Léith). Colm Breathnach (Máirín Nic Eoin), while younger than the INNTI generation, is clearly seen by Nic Eoin as being their spiritual heir.
- 3 Essays are also devoted to important poets like Cathal Ó Searcaigh (Caitríona Ní Chléirchín) and Biddy Jenkinson (Máire de Búrca), who are not identifiably part of any

particular movement. Fionntán de Brún's essay on Gearóid Mac Lochlainn situates the Belfast poet both poetically and politically. He establishes connections between MacLochlainn and Michael Hartnett (to whom an essay is also devoted, written by Róisín Ní Ghairbhí). De Brún highlights Mac Lochlainn's preoccupation with bilingualism and translation.

- 4 Lillis Ó Laoire's essay looks at two Connemara, poets Seán Ó Curraoin and Mícheál Ó Cuaig, comparing their work to the stereotypes of the representation of Connemara in literature. Ciarán Mac Murchaidh underlines the lonely poetic road taken by Greagóir Ó Dúill.
- 5 One quibble with the book is the fact that Ríona Ní Fhríghil's name appears on the top of the facing page of each essay and for ease of movement within the book the name of the individual author would prove more practical for the reader interested in rapid access to one particular essay.
- 6 The essays are complimented by extensive bibliographies, giving a list of both primary and secondary sources for each poet. There is also a short suggested reading list at the end of the book. It will prove an invaluable resource for scholars and students alike.